

Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee
Held on
Thursday, January 10, 2013
8:30 AM

Held at
Transportation Conference Room
269 Melrose Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02907

Board Members Present (listed in alphabetical order):	
Lindsey Callahan	Michael Lewis
Steve Devine	Maureen Martin
Stephen Durkee (Chairman)	Everett Stewart
John Flaherty	Mike Walker
Paul Harrington	Walker
Non Board Members Present (listed in alphabetical order):	
Karen DiLauro	Nancy Russolino
Amy Pettine	Lt. Colonel Raymond Studley
Mark Therrien	Other RIPTA staff and members of the public whose names are on the sign in sheet

Mr. Durkee called this meeting to order at 8:30 AM. Ms. Pettine asked if the group could go around the room to introduce themselves for my benefit (since this is the first that that I have taken notes for the Strategic Planning Committee.)

Power Point Presentation - Strategic Plan Funding Update:

Mr. Durkee informed the Committee that we will be starting with the funding update of the Strategic Plan which we will submit to the Governor. Amy Pettine approached the microphone and notified the Board that she doesn't have any meeting minutes on this agenda because Ellen Mandly is out sick and so they were not able to coordinate getting the minutes from the last minute approved but the next meeting there will be two months of minutes for the Committee to review.

Ms. Pettine addressed the Committee and informed them that at the meeting last month, she handed out a strategic planning update without dollar amounts attached to them and the biggest feedback that occurred was that people wanted a better understanding of what part of the strategic plan was funded or complete and

was part was unfunded, planned or not planned. She went on to say that as they start to do their due diligence of going through it, it gets messy pretty fast in terms of the status of things. She added that when the plan was written in March 2011, at cost estimates were made at that time so there are some objectives in this plan that were achieved but the dollar amounts have changed. She stated that Wayne Hannon of the Resource Team has been a lead on working with the fiscal issues of RIPTA and they decided they weren't ready for prime time to give an exact number on what investments have been made with respect to the strategic plan. That being said, she went on to say that they are providing the Committee today with a framework of how they are going to go about finalizing those numbers. She said it is not as simple as saying, "this is how much we have spent on the plan and this is how much we have left to go" but they are moving in that direction and she feels by the February sub-committee, they will be there.

Ms. Pettine added that they are breaking it out by the five goals of the plan, when they released the plan in March 2011, they said that in total there was going to be a 46 million dollar capital investment and that 46 million does include the local match so that could be federal dollars and local dollars or non-local dollars locally as well. She added that the 19 million is the annual operating costs. Mr. Flaherty asked if that includes the street car? Ms. Pettine said, yes it does and that was a 7 million dollar cost. Ms. Pettine stated that is one of the several items that are on hold.

Mr. Lewis stated he has a question on #2 of her presentation "Attract More Riders". Does capital operating costs reflect spacing when we talk about spacing and what does that reflect? Ms. Pettine answered, we were going to upgrade to bigger bike racks, we were going to be improving interagency coordination on power transit services, we were going to modernize our website, we were going to work closely with the city of Newport to better coordinate motor coaches in the summer time and a parking plan for the summer tourist season. She stated that for example when the plan came out, they met with procurement and maintenance folks and they looked into different models of bike racks to do that upgrade and for a variety of reasons, it wasn't feasible to pursue at the time given the length of the buses, safety concerns and working with vendors so the bigger bike rack upgrade has been table for the time being.

Ms. Pettine went on to say that they have been investing in software upgrades in changes in the RIDE program. She stated she considers this to be an investment of the quality of our para-transit services. She stated what she wants to give the Committee next month, is what exactly the investment has been to improve para-transit services.

Ms. Pettine added that they have updated RIPTA's website and it was a \$102,000 investment which included preparing for real time information and it included making fair products available on line and a lot of other functionality that once they got into it, they determined it was necessary to have a high quality website and it is now mission accomplished.

Ms. Pettine went on to inform the Committee that the Newport Study to work with the folks down there was one piece that took up their planning budget this year. They were working with reducing deficits and they do intend to do this but it is currently not funded.

Ms. Pettine went on to inform the Committee that Goal #2 – Attracting More Riders – by doing bus stop inventory and increasing passenger amenities. She said they have updated their system map this past year and it has been a huge improvement and they plan to do so again after the COA and they have included this in their marketing budget. She went on to say that they have been issuing more information in Spanish which has been included in the marketing budget now.

Ms. Pettine also informed the Committee that fare products are now available online. Mr. Walker asked if on the system map, is that only electronic or is that paper as well? Ms. Pettine answered that they have updated the paper which is reflected online as well. Mr. Walker stated he saw that he saw that it is \$100,000 of operating annually for the system map? Ms. Pettine stated the cost estimate there was based on the operating budget covering the reproduction costs and \$63,000 was what they actually spent to design and reproduce it so they came in far under what the cost estimate was. Mr. Walker stated that one of the things they have found with the State Highway map with the tourism department, is that they have partnered with others to basically put some advertising on it so that they are basically able to produce the map with no costs with enough confidence that they have materials to hand out, as well as do fulfillment so operating wise, it might be something that they may want to look at. Mr. Therrien stated that they have done this in the past where they have gone out and

sold it to sponsors but when this is done, there is a whole process that they want to be there proofing which takes a couple more months. Mr. Walker stated he is not so sure that we even have to get into the sales part so that Ms. Pettine and Mr. Therrien might want to talk to Mark Berger on how they migrated this. Ms. Pettine stated that is great and definitely worth looking into.

Ms. Callahan asked that the \$80,000 for bus stop design, was that already spent? Ms. Pettine answered that was the cost estimate to update the bus stop signs. She stated it is their intention to redesign the bus stop signs so that route codes could be placed on them and when real time information comes, they will have the bus stops codes that people can then be able to text or look up that code. Ms. Pettine went on to say that they have done a little bit of that work already and when they did some branding work for the rapid bus line, they asked that consultant to help come up with some templates. Ms. Pettine went on to say that the City of Providence has been working with the designer to help improve the bus stop designs for the key routes to the City so they are basically taking the work that came out of those two projects and running with it. Ms. Callahan stated that is different than what they talked about at another meeting about the credit to engineering bus stop pedestrian amenities for on the street the kind that DOT could do. Ms. Pettine stated that what Ms. Callahan is referring to is when DOT does a road project, the plans get submitted to RIPTA for review. Discussion ensued amongst the Committee regarding this.

Ms. Pettine stated that she wanted to let the Committee know that regarding the Improved Fare Product Availability, the reason why that number is so high is that in addition to making fare products available online, they have committed in the plan to piloting ticket vending machines (on the street vending machines) where someone can purchase a ticket. Ms. Pettine stated they are planning to do a piloting program where they will have "TVM's" available and they are still sorting through the cost and the operating impact doing that because there is a maintenance cost associated with that. The pilot program will begin with five (5) TVM's for the rapid bus in January 2014.

Mr. Stewart asked Ms. Pettine if she could refresh his memory on the details of "passenger amenities". Ms. Pettine stated that she has been working out of the metro study and they came up with the fact that there should be a certain level of an amenity at a bus stop based on the volume of people standing there. With that said,

they did some cost estimates of shelters and bike racks and schedule holders and they added up, with those volumes, 25-50 people gets X, 50 -100 gets X and they added up the cost for their system and that's how they got to the number she lists in the presentation. Ms. Pettine stated that this is one that she really wants to give the Committee an update on what they have spent because they have done a lot and through the trans-out program, they are probably doing two to three shelters a year and through the rapid bus, they will be doing closer to 25-30 along rapid bus and other key corridors with the match coming from local municipalities or business groups. Ms. Pettine stated it's a pretty complicated program, happening in a variety of ways but she would say that they are probably there on the number just with the work they are doing with the City of Providence. Mr. Lewis asked about a bus shelter in the vicinity of the State House and asked where does that sit in Ms. Pettine's plan. Ms. Pettine answered that they are working on it and that Marco Schiappa, et.al. have been contacted at the Department of Administration to help get this done. Discussion ensued about the actual side of the street the bus shelter would be placed on.

Ms. Pettine informed the Committee that one of the numbers that contributes the most to the cost of the strategic plan is increasing service on the street. Ms. Pettine reviewed that particular PowerPoint slide with the Committee and stated that she wanted to give the Committee an idea of where certain numbers from. She stated that they had talked previously about adding frequency on key routes, 10% increase in service on key routes that are serving RIPTA's highest ridership routes productivity in Wickford at the time. Wickford was not open and we anticipated wanting to serve Wickford and Warwick more directly, creating more tourism services in the summertime, Newport beaches, creating more services to hubs in suburban areas so that people could make connections in East Providence and Warwick without having to come into the City, adding more park and ride service and adding more flex zones so that number got quantified by coming up with 54 buses and 3 vans for the appropriate level of service.

Ms. Pettine stated that Kennedy Plaza funded \$450,000 per capital improvements to enhance the passenger experience. RIPTA did get two competitive grants in the last couple years.

Ms. Pettine stated the last big ticket item under the COA update category in the sense of how it impacts the operating budget was coming up with models to integrate

rider flex. For example, in Tiverton, where the demand might not warrant adding an additional bus route, RIPTA currently will have a flex zone and they do have RIDE vans in the area.

Ms. Pettine stated that the “street car” has been taken out of the Capital Plan, at least in the foreseeable future, until there is more local support.

Ms. Pettine stated the Goal 4 only had one price tag associated with it and if the Committee pulled out the plan, they will notice there are a lot of other objectives but she only pulled out the ones that had a price tag associated with them. Ms. Pettine asked the Committee to please not consider this a progress report on what we have accomplished in the plan because they have done a lot in the plan but she did not include the ones today that were more about process changes and prioritizing things differently and this today is more specifically about funding.

Ms. Pettine stated the last goal is Sustainable Funding Strategy. They did put a cost in the plan to update the plan and that is certainly something that they need to think about because we are now two years in and this conversation should be starting. She went on to say that we may want to change how we have done things for this first strategic plan and give ourselves some feedback and think about that moving forward.

Ms. Pettine stated that a couple of big ticket items in this category that they need to talk about which is the state of repair and this big on the federal level right now. She added that having a good handle on not our fleet replacement but with respect to our capital assets, [i.e. when our boiler breaks, when a roof is going to go, etc]. She stated there is money in our capital plan for state of repair but we want to quantify our point on that. Also, there have been a lot of software upgrades here at RIPTA so she wants to be sure that they quantify that for the Committee and let them know what has been invested but there are certainly a lot of things on the wish list of RIPTA’s IT folks in terms of creating systems that pull out more operational efficiencies but also protect our IT systems in the event of an emergency, etc.

Ms. Pettine added that the other variables to keep thinking of the big picture on the federal side is that federal funding is part of RIPTA’s operating budget (20% of operating budget comes from federal funds) but if the Committee looks at the federal allocation that comes in every year, they can see how the percentage of that pot of money has been continuing to increase. Ms. Pettine went on to say that she thinks it is close to 60% of federal funding that comes to RIPTA is being used toward operating

as opposed to some of the capital investments. Mr. Durkee asked if this is discretionary? Ms. Pettine stated she is not sure if discretionary is the right word and deferred to Mr. Therrien. Mr. Therrien answered that the design of the federal funds is the formula for replacement of what you currently have because you are funded on what you have, what you currently operate so it's mostly on replacement and not new investment. [Discussion ensued amongst committee members regarding federal funds.] Ms. Pettine stated that now there is more of a formula allocation model for federal funds where as in the past there has been more discretionary funds available. She went on to say that this is important for RIPTA because they have been pretty good in getting competitive funds, working with Senators, and with earmarks and all that aside, just in competitive grants RIPTA has gotten 12.6 million in the last three years but those opportunities may not be around in the future to offset some of those capital liens so we have to keep this on our radar.

Ms. Pettine stated that concludes the funding update with an asterisk that it will be refined for the next meeting and she is open to feedback on how they are presenting this information [i.e. is there something that the Committee wants to know that they are not telling them.]

Mr. Flaherty stated that this is generally going in the right direction but asked if she could go back to the very first slide that had the summary to which Ms. Pettine did. Mr. Flaherty stated that down at the bottom of the slide, she has the annual number of roughly 19.5 but when you back out the street car, you end up getting closer to a number more like 10 million. Ms. Pettine stated that the street car is on the calendar side. Mr. Flaherty stated that there are a lot of moving parts to this and he understands the issues with the federal funds and sometimes you can get a competitive grant and sometimes you can't which is hard to predict. Mr. Flaherty went on to say that the goal is to try to get to the point where we can identify in order of magnitude annual costs to achieve the items in the plan. Mr. Flaherty went on to say that he believes that at the last Strategic Plan meeting, he is pretty sure that the Committee Members took a vote to request that the Board conclude such an amount in the budget request that goes to the State. Mr. Lewis stated that he would like to jump in and asked what is the 2014 projected deficit? Ms. DiLauro stated that under the new revised, it is 5.7 million and it was originally 17.7 million. Mr. Lewis stated that you add that 20, and you are getting close to the approval of the 10 cent gas tax

increase, and it is a big number that we are talking about. Mr. Durkee asked if all those from 17 all the way down to 5.7 million, everything is confirmed? Ms. DiLauro answered that no everything is NOT confirmed and that there are certain things that are definite but there are things that they have to get legislative approval or contractual issues. Lt. Colonel Studley stated that they are cognoscente of the strategic plan when they meet with Wayne and Maureen and they are cognoscente of the need to grow and the need to grow slow and systematically and if they have to slow that process down to make sure that the budget is in order, then that is what they have to do and that is the reality of the situation. Mr. Durkee stated we need a new way of funding for RIPTA and we need everyone to know how much it is going to cost to take the system to where it needs to be and there may not be the money there, but people need to know that and need to know what it is going to cost to build the system that everybody wants. Mr. Flaherty stated that he realizes there are a lot of projections here and we can't know for certain how accurate those projections are but that speaks to the benefit of having that trust fund where monies can accumulate and when RIPTA is ready to implement one of the items in the strategic plan, RIPTA's got the refined cost, then you go to the tac(sp?) and make the request for the dispersal of funds from the trust account to implement that item so that there is that check and balance and not just a blank check being written to RIPTA. This takes away the concern that money is being sent over and who knows how it is being spent. Mr. Flaherty went on to say that he doesn't know when the budget needs to be submitted to the Governor's Office or if it already has been but he thinks there is a case to be made that it ought to include some order of magnitude costs for implementing this and he feels that it just reinforces the need for that trust fund. Ms. DiLauro stated that the budget has already been submitted and the budget books are already being printed as we speak because the Governor is speaking to the State on Wednesday night and then the Budget is posted on Thursday. She went on to say that the budget was presented to the Board previously and what was approved went to the State. Mr. Flaherty stated he presumes it did not include in allowing to implement the items in the plan? Ms. DiLauro went on to explain that it would only include those that were approved within those limits and one of the problems they had was the operating match. There are a lot of sources of funds where RIPTA has the federal dollars but the operating match is coming out of RIPTA operating funds and that is a big problem because RIPTA has

such a large deficit. Ms. DiLauro went on to say to continue to fund that with the operating funds is we are just running these huge deficits year after year so some of those have been cut to within certain funding levels. Ms. Pettine stated that Ms. DiLauro is absolutely right and that there are things in the plan that are in the budget because since this plan had been released, RIPTA has been really good about programming our capital program to reflect priorities identified in the plan, making decisions of training investments, and IT investments and website upgrades and things that are checking off the list of items and we have been moving in the spirit of achieving this plan but we don't have enough funds to do all of it. Mr. Flaherty stated he would hate to have people think that if the budget that was submitted gets approved and gets funded, that they solved the problem and it is done. Mr. Lewis stated he agrees with Mr. Flaherty but it is a corollary for RIDOT and everybody knows that our budget submitted doesn't even keep us afloat because it is so far below what it needed to get to state of repair. [Discussion ensued amongst the members].

Ms. Pettine stated that she has been meeting with Mr. Hannon and he has promised to meet with her as often as is necessary to get this Committee the numbers for the next Strategic Planning Committee. Ms. Pettine stated she feels they can commit to do that knowing that the COA will certainly refine the service requests at least and she deferred to Mark Therrien regarding that. Mr. Therrien stated that we are going to go over the COA. It's supposed to be balanced, no increase no decrease but the need from the consultants is higher than the budget in the end. Mr. Durkee asked for a further explanation. Mr. Therrien explained that we are going through on every route, the recommendations or suggestions, and when added up, the reduction are a variance which is going off the senior high-rise off a route and there are some suggestions originally made of removing some routes or service to areas that in Rhode Island are just not going to be acceptable so we started off with the guidelines that those are the geographic important areas but in the end there are going to be a lot of recommendations that we need to do for more money [i.e. more frequency, service to other areas]. Ms. Pettine stated that basically the service guidelines that the Committee approved last month, we are going to fit our system into that but we are not going to meet all of them and we are not going to be able to add service when the loads get to a certain point so we can now quantify that. Mr. Therrien stated that for this type of service we need to run a standard day of X and after 10:00 at night, we are

not going to be able to afford to do that in some areas so there is going to be reductions under the recommendations or under the guidelines but it will be easy for us to show people based on our system that we should be running these extra hours and frequencies so there will be some reductions but there is more need than there is reductions going forward.

Mr. Harrington asked if the COA still on track to be completed in March 2013? Ms. Pettine stated, yes and went on to say that in February, will be the big public outreach months. She stated the if the Committee members go to the RIPTA website and go to COA page, they can find the completed documents. They have done a transit market study, a ridership survey on board and online, route evaluations which are 95% complete. Ms. Pettine went on to say that there are about 600 comments online now from riders. She went on to say that next week the consultants will be in town for 2 days for a workshop with the RIPTA staff and they are going to start developing two scenarios based on culling all of that information together. Those two scenarios are going to be vented with the public in a couple of different ways. She added that during the week of February 11, 2013, they have created teams within their department and they are going to be spread out across the state at key bus stops and other places where they generate a lot of transit activity [i.e. inside Gateway Center in Newport, in Pawtucket, etc] and RIPTA staff will be at these various places during an afternoon collecting feedback, showing people geographic specific recommendations. She stated that packets will be going out to all State legislators, Providence City Council, and the Mayors of major cities, outlining for them the changes coming in their districts and communities, letting them know of community meetings taking place the week of February 25. Ms. Pettine went on to say that there are going to be 7 or 8 community meetings around the State and there will be one here at RIPTA. The Board will get that full update at the February Board meeting, similar presentation with these two scenarios. Ms. Pettine stated they will then take all of that feedback and they will “shuffle the deck” and put it together into a recommendation that will go forward to the Board for the March meeting.

Mr. Harrington stated that he has a question about the federal dollars and he said that he knows that at one point in time, the US government decided to get out of mass transit and said they were not going fund it anymore. Mr. Harrington said to please correct him if he is wrong but what the US government decided to do was send

up a block of money to each State for transit so with those federal dollars, do we have an option of what we want to use the money for? Mr. Therrien explained that in the 1980's, transit was funded operating and capital. In the last 1980's, they did away with operating and they took all the money that we had and said we can use it for capital only (purchase of equipment only). Through the 1990's that filtered down to allowing us to do certain preventative maintenance items so we can do preventive maintenance on vehicles. Mr. Therrien further stated that the definition weakened and weakened so now we can pay any mechanic to do anything on a bus. Mr. Therrien further explained that basically we have gotten to the point that there is a block of money and we can decide how to spend it ourselves. [Discussion ensued amongst the Committee members.]

Mr. Durkee stated he has a couple of questions and has learned this weekend that the COA is not moving into the direction of looking at the external hubs. Mr. Therrien stated that this has gotten eliminated pretty early and that it was looked at and we do need an external hub in the knowledge district as that grows and we have to be thinking about and planning on how to do something over there as that grows. Mr. Durkee asked if there was a reason for moving past it? Mr. Therrien explained that when we come down to the passenger survey, where do you go, where do you want to go and looking at the results, most of the people are still going to the downtown Providence area. Ms. Pettine stated that she thinks that the way they approached the analysis was, "does RIPTA need a second significant footprint in the greater downtown area" and they looked at those numbers and thought that RIPTA could function within the Kennedy Plaza and part of that was them analyzing our birth needs there but certainly improving productivity at HUBS, she feels is an emerging theme of the study, creating super stops and HUBS but maybe more on a suburban view and not necessarily on the intensity of the downtown. Mr. Therrien added that specifically Garden City, Pastore Center, Warwick Mall, which are all close and they all somewhat operate as a HUB so what should be a HUB in that is not going to affect so much the number of people going to downtown Providence. Ms. Pettine stated as an example they looked at East Providence and they looked at whether they can create connectivity so that people could go to Newport from East Providence without having to come to Kennedy Plaza and RIPTA is going to try to make that connection. [A lengthy discussion ensued amongst the Committee regarding HUBs].

Ms. Pettine stated that this is the COA update. Mr. Durkee informed the Committee that the next item on the agenda is Kennedy Plaza.

Kennedy Plaza Update:

Ms. Pettine informed the Committee that there is a group called the Downtown Providence Parks and Conservancy and RIPTA is a part of its Board. This began as an effort out of the Mayor's office going back 5 years when folks from the city police, social service agencies, business community, parks, downtown improvement district would meet on a regular basis to start addressing issues of Kennedy Plaza and it has now evolved to a more official organization and it is housed within the Providence Foundation and this group has a pretty impressive board and the Mayor's office is represented as well. Ms. Pettine went on to say that the Downtown Parks and Conservancy has been programming the last couple of years but they have certainly been wanting to move towards some more significant changes in the way that both the plaza and the surrounding areas is managed and tying it to a downtown park system, increasing programming and activities. Ms. Pettine added that we need to make sure that RIPTA is in sync with this and that our capital investments and our staffing levels are appropriate to be able to meet our customers' needs but also to be part of this larger effort to tie transit into economic development and growth of downtown Providence.

Ms. Pettine also informed the Committee that right now the City of Providence is getting ready to move towards the third phase of their downtown circulator project. The first phase is when Washington Street went two way, second phase was when Empire and Weybosset Streets went two way, third phase is the reconfiguration of Emmitt Square which is the crazy traffic circle outside the Westin and also LaSalle Square which is on the other end of the stretch of Sabin Street. Ms. Pettine stated that there have been folks at the table advocating with the Mayor directly and certainly the planning staff for the downtown circulator which has some excess funds thanks to their need to not relocate some utilities that they originally thought they had to relocate. Ms. Pettine added that this is roughly an 8 million dollar project and they have got a good amount of money to play with but they need to get it out to bid soon. They are looking at coming down towards Kennedy Plaza and maybe making some geometric changes in that area. Ms. Petting added that right now it seems they will be

moving forward because Exchange Terrace will become two way, Dorrance Street will become two way in front of the Biltmore and Washington Street on the edge of Kennedy Plaza will become two way. Fulton Street is yet to be determined. Ms. Pettine added that the City is a really good partner of RIPTA and the Mayor wants to be a part of the economic growth but he will ask RIPTA how this impacts us and how will these changes impact RIPTA's operations. Ms. Pettine stated that they have been in meetings with the City to figure this out. She stated the City will not be changing Kennedy Plaza dramatically but certainly Washington Street, we can see some changes to the curb line and during the COA, she has been anticipating this and she has been focusing in on those berths and she has had RIPTA's consultants working with RIPTA's schedulers to do a pretty extensive analysis of the bus berths in Kennedy Plaza (i.e. their capacity, how they function, do we need the 19 berths that we have in downtown, should we find another home for the inner-city operators, etc). She stated that if a Committee members goes to RIPTA's website, he/she would be able to watch the time-lapse photography that they did, they had someone shoot photography one afternoon from an iphone from the fifth floor of City Hall of the plaza. During this five minute video, we can see the activity of Kennedy Plaza and how we are using the space today.

Ms. Pettine informed the Committee that in the last couple of years, we did get two bus livability grants thanks to our friends in the City and at RIDOT. RIPTA got a \$875,000 grant that we wrote right after the metro study was released to make some investments in Kennedy Plaza [i.e. proper amenities for passengers] and then RIPTA received a half million dollars to approve the connectivity between the train station and the plaza. Ms. Pettine stated we hope to take these monies and attach them to the RIDOT project at Providence Station and the Downtown Circulator Project for the City. She went on to say that the City is using their bond money to match those funds for us.

Ms. Pettine stated she will show the Committee some of the renderings that have been done. They are not RIPTA's renderings but Ms. Pettine stated she wants to give the Committee a sense of the bigger picture. The City received a grant to hire a local design firm to come up with some concepts on how space might be reimaged. She stated this is not an endorsed plan but these are concepts and she knows the Mayor has seen them and the folks downtown have circulated them amongst

themselves but it is part of the report that is coming out in the next couple of weeks from this grant.

Ms. Pettine added that the improvement that is most exciting to RIPTA is the Central Square area which is the entrance to the park. They want to really open it up so that it is more of a street pedestrian plaza connecting our plaza to the park with landscaped seating, maybe a retail establishment of some kind but really trying to breakdown the barrier of Washington Street and have a more connected space between Burnside Park and Kennedy Plaza. Ms. Pettine stated that the potential impact of RIPTA on all of this is that RIPTA is certainly NOT leaving Kennedy Plaza and they would still function there but a combination of analyzing our current berth needs and then how do we distribute them in the space so they can peacefully co-exist with the interest of the downtown community and the Mayor.

Mr. Lewis asked if someone was unfamiliar with the routes of downtown and where RIPTA goes, is there something that shows a person graphically this is where I want to go, so this is where I pick up my bus and could that be more intuitive? Ms. Pettine answered that yes, it could be more intuitive and if someone goes into our building now, we have customer service staff, we have drivers and supervisors and drivers around to ask questions but all of our schedule information is inside. The real time info we will have updated screens. There are screens in there now but they are not in real time but will be. [A lengthy discussion ensued amongst the Committee regarding this].

Mr. Durkee stated that this project is really about three things. It is really about improving the rider experience in Kennedy Plaza and he stated that no one would disagree that it is pretty tough for the average person coming in to work at downtown, it is an economic development strategy and we know from interviews and meetings that there are companies that are looking to move away from it because they don't want to be near the big publicly traded companies so we are trying to address some of those issues. He went on to say that it is about connecting into this park system. For forty years, we have been changing the city by moving the trains and getting a train station, by moving the river and getting Waterplace, the highways are getting all those new parks and now this is transforming Kennedy Plaza into another amenity. It has a lot of different components to it and the trick is that it is happening right now because the City has this money to start making the changes so the

question is how is RIPTA going to facilitate this and it really is spinning on a dime in terms of the decisions that Mark and the Planning staff are going to have to deal with in the next two or three months. Mr. Durkee stated this is important and is significant and he would like the Committee to support the effort as well as the Board. The Board has supported the effort but it's moving further. Ms. Pettine stated this is why she wanted to get this on the Committee's radar today. She added that once the City determines how they are going to use their investment and potentially to use the space, we will then bring it to the Board and will let them know what the impact will be on RIPTA to make sure that we are moving in the right direction. Mr. Lewis asked if we had any discussions about working with apps to help, are we doing anything like that? Ms. Pettine answered that RIPTA has made a lot of strides over the last couple of years, we have a mobile website with schedules listed that are far easier to read on mobile phones, and when the real time info comes, RIPTA intends to put the bus stop code on every stop and have texting capability so that the passenger will know when the next bus is coming. [Discussion ensued amongst Committee members regarding apps, etc.]

Mr. Walker asked as part of that experience with some of these tools that are out there and the services that are out there, is that prominent in the hotels so that tourists can do way finding and leave as much money behind while they are here. Ms. Pettine stated that we have a good relationship with Martha Sheridan at the Visitors Bureau and the hotels and RIPTA has actually created an online fare product this past year of a one day pass so that hotels can buy them in advance, and give them out to tourists or anyone coming in for conventions. Before this, they would have to buy RipTiks but RIPTA has created something that hotel managers could go online and stock up on and keep in their hotel drawers. RIPTA also works with the Dunk when there is a big event and puts information in packets, RIPTA has a booth at the Dunk that has RIPTA on it with information and Ms. Pettine stated she feels that RIPTA does a good job on this front. Mr. Harrington stated that they have advertising on the sign. He stated he was at the Dunk last night for the Syracuse game and he looked up and saw RIPTA.com and he doesn't remember it being there last year. Mr. Therrien stated this is part of our relationship with Martha Sheridan and the hotel group downtown. Mr. Therrien also stated that the COA consultant had said to them, 'why do you use these trolleys and why don't you just get rid of them because it will make your

operation easier". He stated but when they meet with Martha, that is a key component for RIPTA linking with them. It's the special services that we offer for example the people downtown want to go to a fancy restaurant in Providence, and a lot of them would take the trolley when they wouldn't take a regular bus. The same thing with Newport, a fancy vehicle going to the mansions is very important. He added that we know this locally but somebody from the outside thinks it's an expense, etc. Mr. Walker stated the trolley is predictable too because it runs on the route and keeps going along. Mr. Therrien added the trolleys are very important because it is segregation from the regular fleet and it is very important so it helps keep our relationship, so they promote transit in the hotels, etc. because of the special vehicles and that is a big trade back that you can't put a dollar number on but it is important to RIPTA. Mr. Harrington added that he can say that as someone who drove a trolley, what Mr. Therrien has just said, is absolutely true.

Mr. Harrington stated that we need to make the transit hub efficient but we also need to make it pedestrian friendly and we need to invite people to want to use mass transit. Discussion ensued regarding this.

Ms. Pettine stressed the message that RIPTA is not leaving Kennedy Plaza, RIPTA is just co-existing and that message needs to get out there. Mr. Durkee asked Ms. Pettine if she had anything else to discuss during this meeting? She did not have anything else to discuss.

Old Business:

Mr. Flaherty said he just has one item under "Old Business". He stated he would like to just remind folks that last year, there was the O'Grady Bill that went in and did not prevail. He understands that it is in Legislative Council so it is being reintroduced so he just wants the Committee members to have this on their radar.

Mr. Durkee asked if there was anything else. No one had anything else to discuss.

Conclusion:

Mr. Durkee asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lewis made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Harrington. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 AM.

Nancy J. Russolino